Railway Chairs.—Mr. C. Barlow, Chancery-lane, has patented some improvements in machinery for the manufacture of railway chairs. The machine claimed under this patent is intended to effect the manufacture of railway chairs from plates or bars of metal at a single operation. A piece of metal of sufficient size for the purpose is first sheared off from the plate, and is pressed between two dies, one being stationary and the other attached to a vertical sliding head, by which the edges are bevelled off, and the holes for the spikes punched out. The partially-formed chair then passes under the action of two other dies, attached by arms to a second sliding-head, by which the lips are formed and bent up, and the operation completed; each revolution of the main shaft turning out a chair in a finished state.

Penny Omnibuses.—Penny omnibuses are becoming very general in this town, and are, one and all, driving a capital business. No sooner does one arrive at the top of Dale-street and discharge its load, or rather overload, than it is beset by a crowd of new candidates for conveyance. No doubt, this pays well; but we would exhort the public authorities to exercise vigilant supervision, as well for the public safety as for the prevention of cruelty. These cheap conveyances are evidently a great public convenience, and they will be none the less remunerative or useful if they are put under systematic regulation.—*Liverpool Paper.*

Fish Farms and Water Companies.—Might not our water companies farm fish in their great reservoirs, to the improvement of their water? Might not the Board of Health animate their projected "gathering grounds" with spawn, and supply the metropolis, not only with pure water, but with wholesome fish? Throw little fishes into the great pool, and they become big fishes gradually. What, then, do they grow big upon? Not upon water only, but upon things—some of them very impure things—in the water, obviously. They themselves can add to the water nothing that they have not taken out. By as much, therefore, as the fishes have increased in bulk, deducting the increase due to water merely, by so much will the reservoir have been purified by its inhabitants; and that which is unsavoury to look at in a water bottle, will be very welcome to us in another form, produced at table hot under a dish-cover.—*Dickens's Household Words.* Worth a thought, unsound as the main inference is.

The Ancient Sculptured Stones of Moray.—A foreign artist, employed by the Spalding Club of Aberdeen, is now engaged in taking drawings of the sculptured monuments of the district, with the purpose of publishing them with suitable descriptions among the works of the Club. "It is the opinion of some," says the *Forres Gazette*, "that the figures on several of these monuments are a species of hieroglyphics which can be identified not only with others of Scandinavian origin, but with those in Egypt and the East. An ancient sculptured stone at Brodie has likewise been figured, and for the first time. It bears curiously-wrought figures of animals, and runic knots, and has the two orbs with the zig-zag ornament between, common to this singular class of monuments."

Metropolitan Interment Act.—A Bill was lately introduced by Government to amend the Metropolitan Interment Act of 1850, and to authorise the advance of 137,000*l.* to the General Board of Health for the purposes of the Act, the same to be secured with 4 per cent. interest on the future fees and payments to be received for interments. The Bill contains the following provision:—"And whereas the discontinuance under the said Act of interment in a parish may occasion the over-crowding of the burial-grounds of other parishes in the metropolitan burial district; the body of any parishioner or inhabitant of any parish in which interment is ordered to be discontinued under the said Metropolitan Interments Act shall not, after the time from which interment is so ordered to be discontinued, be buried in the burial-ground of any other parish within the metropolitan burial district; provided nevertheless, that nothing in this enactment shall extend to prejudice or affect the provisions contained in the 17th and 18th sections of the said Act; and every person having the care or control of any such burial-ground, who knowingly authorises or permits any burial contrary to this enactment, shall be guilty of a misdemesnour."

New Invention in Bridge-building.—Mr. Samuel Perks, of Emerson-street, Southwark-bridge, Engineer, has registered, under the new Act for the protection of inventions, his claims to a novelty in building timber-bridges, columns, masts of ships, &c., which consists essentially of a combination of pieces irregularly crossing, overlapping, binding, and interweaving, whereby, when secured by bolts, screws, or nails, and cemented, and made impervious to wet, &c. by asphaltum, bitumen, or other convenient cementive material, solid beams of any length, say 1,000 feet, may be made, by even unskilful hands, of far greater strength (according to his statement) than any single piece of beam timber, and at far less expense of either time or money than so much brick or stone work. There are other modifications of the same principle claimed, such as the formation of masts and keels of ships, the masts being made of concentric pieces crossed and bound together to any requisite length and girth. Specimens of the inventions are deposited in the International Exhibition.

Bells, Great and Little.—In our last we copied an article from the *Morning Herald*, under the above title, in which it was stated that the largest bells in England are those of Christ Church, Oxford, weighing 17,000 lbs.; St. Paul's, London, 11,474 lbs.; and Great Tom of Lincoln, 10,854 lbs. Singularly enough, no mention was made of the largest and heaviest bell in this country—the Great Peter bell in York Minster, which weighs, we are told 24,080 lbs., and was cast by Messrs. Mears in the year 1845. This bell was purchased by the citizens of York, and presented to the cathedral in that year; and they are now making an effort to obtain a suitable clock with striking works, to attach to this finest-toned monarch of the bell-chamber.

Accident near Westminster Bridge.—A strange accident occurred near the foot of the bridge, in the road leading to it from the Lambeth side, on Saturday last. An immense void, about 42 feet in circumference, it is said, and very deep, was discovered by the vibration of the surface and the sinking of an omnibus into the macadamized road. It was ascertained that an old sewer had broken in, and that the tide had washed away the material beneath the road which covered the void with a mere thin coating. Barriers and shoring were put up, but the roadway is clear on each side.

British Zinc.—Forty years since, when the Vieille Montagne was in the hands of the "alchemists"(!), Messrs. Hobson and Sylvester, of Sheffield, rendered zinc malleable, and Philip George, jun., of Bristol, perfected the discovery, and rolled it into sheets as large as copper sheets were usually made for market. The delay in its progress was by putting too much labour to it, by making coffee-pots and other trumpery instead of applying it to rain pipes, roof and gutter covering, &c., and the discountenance given by plumbers and iron founders. As soon as we had made it fully and extensively serviceable, then Mr. Mosselman, of Liège, tried his hand, and the year 1828 was about the first time his zinc came to our market. It was stubborn and difficult to work; but it bore a duty of 10*l.* or 15*l.* a ton, and so it served to cut away our supplies to our colonies by reason of the drawback. Then the market was deluged by foreign zinc: it lay in the warehouses a dead, and, being some sea damaged, it was almost a rotting, stock. I believe the foreigners got sick of it, and sold all off to one man, who, by reselling to a large company (who are now rather cramped by that and other speculations), realised a large sum. One—two—three agencies were set agoing: all got sick; and the price rose, in 1841, to 40*l.* a ton: it got up afterwards to 51*l.* a ton, and *now* it is 20*l.* a ton for sheet zinc. Firm after firm failed; and at this time the market is in foreign hands by bringing over at once about 3,000 tons of sheet zinc, and running down the price, allowing agents to sell *only for cash retail*, and thus taking away the profit of all other small manufacturers and dealers. We can cast zinc quite as well as the foreigners; but they are welcome to their mare's nest. We know it to be unsuitable: it loses specific gravity by casting, becomes brittle, and we have more suitable materials for casting.—L.

Fall of a Building at Hull.—On Tuesday in week before last an accident occurred at Hull, whereby one man was killed and several others were dreadfully injured. The circumstance is thus described by the local *Advertiser*:—There is building in Jarratt-street a large chapel for the use of the Primitive Methodists, the foundation-stone of which was laid on Good Friday by the mayor. Mr. Sissons, of Hull, is the architect, and Mr. Musgrave the builder. Great progress had been made with the building, and no accident of any importance had occurred in the course of erection until Tuesday last. At the south end of the building a recess is made for the singing gallery, and above this a beam 26 feet long was placed from each side of the recess on which to carry up the wall. The beam rested at each end upon pillars erected for the purpose, 14 inches wide, and projecting 4½ inches from the wall. Down these pillars ran pipes, for the purpose, we believe, of ventilation. The beam, it is alleged, was let into the brick work at each side to the depth of nine inches, and was also trussed with iron. Shortly after two o'clock on Tuesday afternoon several men were engaged in carrying up the wall upon this beam, whilst others were at work in the gallery beneath, when the wall upon the beam was observed to rock,—the beam itself broke out of the wall on each side,—and the men were precipitated along with the materials to the ground, a height of some 40 feet.

Metropolitan Reading and Waiting Rooms, Baths, and Refreshment Rooms.—A joint-stock company is said to be in progress of formation for the purpose of establishing easily-accessible newspaper and reading rooms, with baths, lavatories, water-closets, and all the necessary appendages to a dressing-room, in the most prominent positions and thickly populated localities in London. It is only surprising that some such scheme has not hitherto been carried out. The want of such convenience has long been felt in the metropolis, and it only requires that they should be conducted under stringent regulations and proper control, and with due regard to economy, comfort, and respectability, to insure undoubted success.

John Knox's House.—It appears that this venerable structure is still in so tottering and dangerous a condition as to require that a portion of it should be immediately pulled down. The following interlocutor in the case was on Thursday pronounced by the Dean of Guild Court:—"31st July, 1851.—Having resumed consideration of this case, with the report of Mr. Black, in the meantime ordains the defenders forthwith to pull down and remove the whole northern portion of the gable complained of, to the extent of eighteen feet southward, as being dangerous to the inhabitants and the public. *Quoad ultra* continue the cause. John Duncan, D. G."—*Caledonian Mercury.*

Christ Church, Spitalfields, is about to be repaired. The following has been sent to us as a list of tenders delivered on the 9th instant, for cleansing, painting, and decorating the church; also tenders for alterations of the chambers over vestries at the east end of chancel:—

	Decorating.	Alterations.	Total.
	£	£	£
Piper	2,048	191	2,239
White	1,356	151	1,507
Hayward and Nelson	1,170	175	1,345
Mosley	1,170	167	1,337
Taylor	1,114	165	1,279
Ashby	1,029	161	1,190
Tolley	949	119	1,068

One of the tenders appears to have been made under some misconception.

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